

so this is ISRAEL

AROUND the world, a new generation of all ages is now growing up amid day-to-day lessons of what Israel is all about. If Israel fails to achieve its aims, it will not be for want of trying. It will be for want of trying the proper means. If Israel succeeds in its aims, she will go down in history as a modern nation born of genocide. Even Hitler's Third Reich failed to do that.

The recent massacre and mutilation of more than a thousand defenceless civilian men, women and children in West Beirut's Palestinian refugee camps was Israel's responsibility—whether directly or indirectly. Even the cautious and conservative Foreign Secretary, Francis Pym, has said as much. The lessons to be drawn from Israel's behaviour, including its invasion of Lebanon, are important and universal on at least two levels. On one level, Israel's belligerence, bellicosity and barbarism strike at the heart of all humanity. We are all attacked if any section of humanity—whether Lebanese, Palestinian or some other—is under attack. On another level, particularly important for libertarians, is the continued obscenity of abusing the ends to justify the means. Israel as a people was wronged in the past, Israel now feels justified, even self-righteous, in wronging the Palestinians as a people and anyone else who stand in their way in, so they say, trying to right that first wrong.

The implications of the crimes against humanity performed on this second level are enormous. Israel is able to play the idiot game of political labelling in order to justify its case and disqualify that of its opponents: because Israel had been attacked by authoritarian regimes in the past, it thinks it cannot, by whatever action it chooses to take, become an authoritarian regime as well. Israel appears to believe in this, and hopes that the rest of the world will share this belief. But frankly Israel doesn't care; so long as it can destroy all opposition to its claims

and control, Israel will have won its political and moral (!) battles—in its eyes at least. For Israel, might is right.

The principles that apply in the Middle Eastern war apply equally to at least three broader issues nearer home: class, race and sex. What libertarians—and anyone else for that matter—can do with an appalling situation in the Lebanon or elsewhere is to seize the cogency of the events in order to re-examine critically our own positions on these issues. Israel's position has been reinforced, initially and all along at least until recently, by a certain weight of world opinion that has broadly accepted its argument that because it had been subject to racial war in the past, it is justified in waging a racial war in the present. This kind of argument is generally accepted by authoritarian communists and fascists, and all shades of liberals and conservatives in between, and practised by several of them; but not by libertarians.

Similarly, libertarians do not accept the orthodox left argument that because the working class has been controlled in the past, it is the working class who should control the revolution and the society that comes afterwards. Any class that comes to control a society, whatever its original background, only becomes the new ruling class. If we are to create a classless society, the means to achieve it (eg, revolutionary participation) has to be a classless one as well. The society that results must also be as free—ie, free of the professional class of politicians.

Racism is not simply a matter of white against black. It is a matter of discriminating on the basis of race, between people of any two (or more) races, or even between persons of the same race. Discrimination in this sense is bigotry practised against a particular person or group, sometimes ostensibly in favour of some other person or group, and is distinct from merely distinguishing between different persons or groups. Such discrimination can be negative, which is racism as is commonly understood, or it can be positive (reverse discrimination or 'affirmative action'), which attempts to right wrong.

Libertarians on principle do not favour racial or any other discrimination, for even positive discrimination, which assumes that the ends justify the means, can result in odious methods and self-righteous attitudes similar to Israel's. Libertarians favour the transformation of the very basis of existing society that makes others seek positive discrimination, rather than, as positive discrimination does, simply modifying the surface symptoms of

continued on page 2

oxford street TRIAL

ON Monday 27th a further Oxford St 48 defendant appeared to answer several charges. These included assault, criminal damage, threatening behaviour and obstruction. The defendant was arrested while trying to stop PC Nicholson of the SPG from beating absolutely senseless a young man. The PC was repeatedly hitting the youth on the head with his truncheon causing what a witness described as 'massive bleeding'.

Prior to the case starting the defendant made a statement outlining her political beliefs, reasons for going on the march and ending by refusing to recognize the court. Accepting this as a 'not guilty' plea the case began. As seems to be the usual pattern the police evidence veered from the sublime to the ridiculous. A 'civilian' witness was also called but must have suffered a serious crisis of conscience because he disagreed with the police on just about every point. The defence was not subject to the same problems and the main witness, a passerby at the time of the arrest, impressed everyone, including, most importantly, the magistrate. The verdict finally was acquittal on all charges except the obstruction charge. For this a sentence of two weeks imprisonment, suspended, was imposed. So the defendant left court unhindered.

From the 10 or so cases that have been decided so far there have been mainly conditional discharges, bind-overs and such rather than outright fines. With the few acquittals obtained as well, prospects for the rest of the 48 seem good. There will be further reports as cases progress.

BRIQUE LEFLIC

ISRAEL

such a society (eg, encouraging the state to recruit more ethnic minorities into the SAS).

Sexism is a term whose current popularity is exceeded only by the extent to which it is misused. Analogous to racism, sexism is the policy or practice of discriminating on the basis of sex. Sexual chauvinists indulge in negative sexual discrimination, and sexual egalitarians often pursue positive sexual discrimination; each can be adopted by either sex for or against either sex. It is thus just as sexist to restrict participation in an activity to one sex for one day of the week as it is to restrict participation in that same activity to another sex for all the other days of the week. In a society of mixed sexes, it is difficult if not impossible to discriminate in favour of one sex without at the same time also discriminating against the other sex. The case for positive sexual discrimination has often been made, but the case against, which is often at least as important, is seldom if ever heard. It makes far better sense to transform a society, or at least those activities of a society, which needlessly differentiates between the sexes in asexual or non-sexual activity, than it does simply to reallocate the artificial limits to activity imposed on one sex or another, in trying to redress an existing imbalance.

Class, racial and sexual equalities have to be achieved and preserved, and this is best secured in the libertarian fashion by removing those conditions, material or moral, which allow for the creation of those inequalities in the first place. This can be done directly, and should be done directly, ie, by direct action, without recourse to bureaucratic procedure. The personal is the political, and just as every necessary personal action is necessarily a political act, the most consistent political acts begin with and are sustained by committed personal action. Organised group activity may be necessary, but without personal participation and responsibility, such activity becomes an authoritarian farce. Authoritarian means hold out the promise of quick results, but the results are unpredictable, and the solutions can be as bad as or worse than the problems.

Replacing the rule of one class by the rule of another makes a travesty of revolution; racial oppression in particular can be mutual—one form of racism does not prevent or eradicate another, but is likely to be self-defeating and both forms mutually perpetuating; male chauvinism demolishes what it seeks to preserve, and female chauvinism legitimises what it seeks

to abolish—each form of sexual chauvinism ‘balances’ the other, feeding off the other, so that instead of one there are two forms of chauvinism. The old proletariat too easily becomes the new bourgeoisie, the ‘cause’ of one ethnic group is no answer to the ‘cause’ of another, and matriarchy is no substitute for patriarchy. This is not an argument against the need for struggle, but a statement on the need for using different means to secure different ends. It is therefore an argument for a proper struggle for genuine change.

All the states involved in military manoeuvres in Lebanon share in some measure the responsibility for the carnage in West Beirut: Israel at least for allowing and assisting the Christian Phalangist militia to move into the Chatilla-Sabra refugee camps, as if it neither thought nor cared that a mass slaughter would occur, and the multinational forces, led by the US, for withdrawing too soon as if they neither thought nor cared that an Israeli invasion would follow. This demonstrates the callousness of states in general, and the intentions of Israel in particular. It can in no way diminish the blame on Be-ginite Israel, which as it happens did no less than engineer events so as to show that the Phalangists had their finger on the trigger. In this instance, Israel stands as a clear embodiment of the classic state apparatus. The Third Reich failed to establish itself because there was too little support and too much opposition from the other nations. Will the nations of the

world now allow Israel this opportunity?

Israel does not have a right to exist any more than Palestine or any other nation has a ‘right’ to exist. God-given rights are the invention of a fevered imagination. But equally, when people live together in communities and come together to form nations, no one else has the right to deny them that existence. The problem bound up with Israel is the old one about the ethnic nation: because there are those who still see Jews as a personal threat and a Jewish nation as an organised threat, so Israel says, it is necessary for Jews to collaborate for personal protection and to organise for national protection. Yet if Jews did not see themselves as part of a necessary state, with all the assertiveness and pugnacity and violence that go with it, there can be no grounds for expecting others to see them as part of a (threatening) state, and thus no grounds for Jewish fears of (retaliatory) persecution.

The whole Israeli argument is a tautology, with one or more forms of racism being evoked ostensibly to counteract another, and offence being given in the name of defence being taken. No one can or should stop anyone else from living as a Jew, only from the formation of a state likely to threaten others who are not Jews. Our cause is not Israel's, and Israel's cause, and methods, are not libertarian ones. This cannot be said too often, even if nothing else can be more obvious today.

BN

Housing Shambles

GOVERNMENTS are very efficient at organising methods of killing people. They are also very efficient at seeing that those that own continue to own, and those that control society continue to do so. They are also good at persuading ordinary people that they need governments to do everything for them. In spite of the fact that the provision of ordinary needs are very inefficiently catered for, people still fall for all this waffle and do not see that they are quite capable of doing all these things for themselves.

In Sheffield 17 to 19 September this year, there was the annual meeting of the National Federation of Housing Associations. Some of these Associations have descended from the time when rapid industrialisation led to the growth of urbanisation and all the social problems associated with it. Although there is still an element of paternalism in the movement there is also a growing amount of communal living and self-help particularly among the short-life groups. The disgrace of empty houses in areas of dire housing need led to the squatters movement which

as it offended our property based society led to some legalisation of occupation of empty housing. The leaving of houses empty has caused enormous damage to the housing stock. When houses are left empty they get damp which causes dry rot and when the houses are subsequently rehabilitated much more work has to be done. The Housing Associations are both independent of the private and public sector but rely upon the Housing Corporation for finance. The Housing Corporation of course gets its money from the government which of course prefers to spend its money sending things to the bottom of the sea or up in the air. As the council housing programme has been severely curtailed, the Housing Associations are more and more important in providing housing at reasonable rent and for single people for whom provision has been seriously neglected.

The housing problem has been with us a long time and it is an artificial problem. There is no shortage of materials or builders. In 1919, the heroes did not come home to homes fit for them and in 1946,

they squatted the army camps. An attempt to supplement the housing for rent stock was made after the first world war by council house building, and more progressive councils built detached houses with large gardens. Others built blocks similar to the Victorian charity housing for 'the deserving poor'. After the second world war we had prefabs, a few still occupied 40 years after. The councils also built tower blocks which were to become the new slums of the 70s. The architects never lived in the housing they paternalistically provided.

One of the factors that has caused the shrinking of the housing stock for rent has been the growth of owner occupancy which serves also the purpose of making more dependency on the system. The purchasing of more space by those that can afford it makes it more difficult for those that are only able to rent, also there is through the tax system a heavy subsidy on owner occupied housing.

The housing problem is a severe social problem and is getting worse—the class nature of society is clearly exposed in the field of housing. The paternal nature of housing provision, its quality and the sub-standard accommodation provided for a large section of the population can only be solved by a fundamental change in society. Like every sphere of human need housing has to be an activity in which everybody has a say, those that live in the housing and those that build. Some modern domestic building is appalling and the financial aspect has interfered with building technique so that in the long run even in narrow financial terms it has proved uneconomical. There are many more people when the mystery of building houses put there by the professionals is swept away who are quite able to play an active part in the planning, the building and the maintenance of the places in which they live.

ALAN ALBON



Reports

BENN GETS CUSTARD PIE

THERE was stunned disbelief at the Wales TUC organised 'Right to Work Rally' in Cardiff on Saturday when an anarchist strolled from the crowd and hurled a custard pie at their deity on the stage—Tony Benn. It was almost worse than pieing the Pope at the Vatican. So great was the shock of the assembled Leftie hacks, that our comrade was able to deliver a short speech along the lines of 'Fuck the Right to Work' before being personhandled away by stewards. After this, and a brief finger-wagging from the law, he made a hasty exit from the scene of the outrage... which was just as well because by the time the Lefties recovered consciousness, they were looking annoyed. After this brief highlight the pathetic rally droned on, sending everyone back to sleep with its 'No return to the 30's... Most reactionary Tory government since... garbage.'

NO MILITARY MICROWAVES

'MILITARY MICROWAVES' is an exhibition being held from 20th to 22nd October at the Cunard International Hotel, Hammersmith, where electronics manufacturers will be showing off the microchips that form the brains of many modern weapons. These seemingly innocent circuits are as responsible for killing as the shells and missiles that they guide to their targets. Their production is big business, as the presence of military electronics firms among the top ten British exporters shows. For short-term profit, these companies are helping arm the world and so put off the day when nonviolent means are used to settle disputes.

Opposition to 'Military Microwaves' is being co-ordinated by people in London Peace Action, the anti-militarist group. We would especially like to hear from people living or working in Hammersmith who are interested in being involved.

If you want to find out more about the arms trade, come to the Campaign Against Arms Trade national meeting on Saturday 25th September at St Francis of Assisi Centre, Pottery Lane, London W14. It's open to all, and is a chance to learn about anti-arms trade campaigning all round the country. There will be a workshop to plan opposition to 'Military Microwaves' taking place during the meeting.

If you can't get to the CAAT meeting and can't be in Hammersmith, don't despair! Write to us for information to base your protest letters on:

CAAT, 5 Caledonian Rd, Kings Cross, London N1

WILDCAT WILL BE BACK!

A Statement by the Jewish
Anarchist Committee

AS the last of the PLO and Syrian troops pulled out of Beirut, President Reagan sat before the American people on nationwide TV and called for a 'fresh start' in the efforts for peace in the Middle East. While his recognition of the centrality of the Palestinian issue in the mid-east conflict was lauded by many around the world, Reagan's proposal for Palestinian autonomy under the auspices of Jordan, definitely fell short of the mark.

Did the Reagan statement contain at least the seeds of a real peace settlement in the Mashreq (the area between Egypt and the border of Turkey and Iran), as many have claimed? We don't think so.

The main purpose of the statement was to bolster the US's sagging credibility and influence in the Arab world. The only thing that Reagan is concerned about is stabilizing relations between the conflicting parties in that region, which is so vital to the strategic interests of the US. Towards this end, Reagan offered nothing but diplomatic half measures designed only to mollify the US's Arab clients without seriously damaging the US's relationship with Israel. Despite Begin's negative response, the ploy seems to have worked. However, while Reagan may pat himself on the back for his diplomatic coup, the fact is that the Mashreq is no closer to peace now than it was on June 5, when Israel invaded Lebanon.

The fact is that there can be no real peace in the Mashreq until the rights of all peoples including the Palestinians and the Lebanese, to self-determination and equality, are guaranteed and respected. Furthermore, war and military force must be rejected as a means of resolving conflict, both foreign and domestic, if peace is to become a reality—not only in the Mashreq, but throughout the world.

Of course, within the context of the present international social, political and economic order, governed as it is by power politics, real peace is unobtainable and self-determination and equality for all peoples are myths. The tragic drama of Israel's invasion of Lebanon and the cynical comedy of diplomacy that followed, are proof enough of this contention. What then is the solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the root of the perpetual state of war that exists between Israel and its Arab neighbors?

First of all, there must be mutual recognition and reciprocity of rights between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. By this we don't mean some diplomatic agreement between the PLO and the Israeli government. Rather, what we are referring to is the fundamental realization by Israeli and Palestinian working and poor people that they share common interests which transcend national and religious difference—namely the universal struggle of all working and oppressed peoples for a better life and a better world. Only when Israeli,

Peace in the Mashreq



Palestinian and all other working and oppressed peoples refuse to wage war against each other and unite in common struggle against all forms of oppression, domination, exploitation and imperialism, can real human liberation, self-determination and peace ever become a reality.

To be sure, the seeds of Jewish and Palestinian solidarity have been planted long ago as Jews and Palestinians have fought together, hand in hand, against Israel's continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, the annexation of the Golan, and the second class status of Arabs within Israel. Recent examples of such solidarity were the massive demonstrations in Israel against the June 5 invasion. Yet despite the constant overtures by the Israeli peace camp, the Palestinian resistance movement and the Arab Left still cling to the insular nationalist strategy of 'armed struggle', which does not attempt to distinguish between the people. It is for this reason that we argue for the creation of an autonomous, non-hierarchical movement, secular and democratic in its orientation, that could break down the walls of national and religious chauvinism and revanchism, and help to coordinate the struggles for social liberation and peace in Israel and the Mashreq.

There are many who support as an im-

mediate solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict the creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. While we recognize that such a solution would be inevitable if and when Israel pulls out of those territories, we do not feel that this would result in the actual liberation and self-determination of the Palestinian people. After all, can a people be considered truly free and in full control of their destiny simply because a state has been established in their name? One need only look at history and the current world situation for the answer.

All states, no matter what their ideology, religious orientation or economic system, derive their authority from armed force and coercion. They exist only to protect the interests of their ruling class. Furthermore, in this age of integrated world economy, 'Dooms-day' weaponry and 'protection-racket' imperialism, there can be no such thing as national sovereignty and security. Consequently, as anarchists (opponents of every form of hierarchy and authority), we cannot support so-called 'national liberation' movements, whether they be Zionism, the PLO or any other, since they all have as their goal the establishment and perpetuation of a nation state (ie, the creation of a new ruling class and new oppression).

Of course, this does not mean that we ignore or deny the importance of people struggling for the right to express and develop their cultures freely and to determine their own futures. Rather, we contend that the underlying focus of every popular struggle must be the elimination of those social, economic and political relationships and systems which enable the ruling classes of all nations to dominate and exploit the rest of society.

As anarchists, we believe in a society in which people control their own lives and not each other. We believe that the natural and social wealth and resources of the world cannot be the 'private property' of any one individual, corporation or state. As we see it, the means of production, distribution and communication, the necessities of human life and survival—food, shelter, health care, culture, technology and education—should be directly and democratically administered from the local level up to the national and international level, and should be free and equally accessible to all. Therefore, our long-term proposal for a new social order in the Mashreq and the world in general is the creation of a decentralized supranational, free federation of peoples, not states, that would be based on the principles of free association and cooperation, direct-democracy and generalized self-management.

At present we join with all those in Israel, Lebanon and around the world who protest against the continuation of the war in Lebanon. We support the demand for the immediate and total withdrawal of Israeli and Syrian military forces from Lebanon and an end to all foreign intervention, political as well as military. While condemning the invasion we feel duty bound to also condemn the wave of antisemitism that has surfaced and has resulted in the murder of innocent people.

We continue to oppose Begin's oppressive social and economic policies and support the struggle of the Palestinian people in the 'administered' territories against the military occupation and the threat of annexation. We likewise condemn the annexation of the Golan and Begin's repression of the Druse. As we stated before, we support the right of all peoples to self-determination and equality in the context outlined above. Finally, we oppose the international arms trade and arms race as well as all forms of war, militarism and imperialism.

It is our hope that from that troubled corner of the world we call the Mashreq, there will emerge a new vision of a revolutionary social order based on freedom, equality and peace for all peoples.

For more information write:

Jewish Anarchist Committee
PO Box 692
Old Chelsea Station
New York, NY 10113

Call: Shlomo (201) 355-2123

Babar still in prison

ON the night of 5/6 July 1982, the Warsaw militia arrested Roger Noel, also known as BABAR, a militant anarchist well-known in Brussels. A member of the self-managed printing works '22 March', he was a moving spirit of the ALO (Assoc for the Freedom of the Air Waves), and was transmitting at the time of his arrest. BABAR (described by Polish TV as 'this Belgian anarchist with sympathies for Solidarnosc', delivered a transmitter clandestinely to Radio Solidarnosc hidden in medical equipment. His arrest is part of a wave of repression directed against Radio Solidarnosc (Warsaw), which has resulted in the imprisonment of seven people.

At present Noel is confined in a cell with 'common rights'—in accordance with his own wishes, and faces a sentence of between 3 and 10 years, depending on the precise nature of the charges. At the moment the situation is still not clear—the first hearing of Roger's case was on August 13th and reports have not yet filtered through, but we do know that he is still in prison. His comrades at the 22 March printing works have called for an international campaign of solidarity to secure his release, asking that it be set within a framework of demands for the end of repression in Poland, and the release of all Solidarnosc prisoners.

Letters demanding his immediate release should be sent to:

Consulate General of the Polish Peoples Republic, 19 Weymouth St, London W1.

Copies of a petition have been produced, and can be obtained from the Direct Action Movement, International Commission (see Below). Please keep us informed of any action you take, and let us know of any response you get from the Polish authorities.

**DIRECT ACTION MOVEMENT,
INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION**

Also available:

Action briefing No: 2 on Arkadiy Tsurkov. (please send sae)

Black & White A3 poster demanding Tsurkov's release. 10p each, plus post.

No Frontiers: First issue of DAM's International Review, 20p plus 16½p post.

issue no: 2 in preparation. 25p plus post.

Direct Action: DAM's bi-monthly paper. 25p plus post.

Direct Action Movement,
164/166 Corn Exchange Buildings,
Hanging Ditch,
Manchester,
England.

In brief

PAVLIK Morozov died fifty years ago this week. Pavlik gained fame in the USSR for denouncing his father as an enemy of the State in 1932. The media has made a big thing of the anniversary. There are several statues to the lad. Little changes, Ayatollah Khomeini has just exhorted students to observe and report on their teachers.

THE Royal Navy is to fit quick firing cannon to some of its ships. This follows disappointment with the effectiveness of the sophisticated radar and missile systems used in the South Atlantic. The tactic for coping with Exocet missiles is to throw up a curtain of shells and hope that the enemy runs into it. So much for modern technological miracles. The money for the new guns is to come out of the special government fund, so presumably we are to be reassured that it will cost us nothing. Incidentally, this fund is called 'Operation Corporate', which seems appropriate for an economy like that of the Falklands which was dominated by one company; a subsidiary of Coalite Ltd. We have not noticed any great enthusiasm for pointing out the Falklands as an example of the benefits of free market capitalism.

AMERICAN psychiatrists have identified another major psychological condition. A report in the Journal of the American Medical Association discusses a syndrome where men about to be married feel threatened by an alien invasion. Their response was to rush out and play Space Invaders and symbolically fight back. In case anybody is beginning to worry, we can reassure you that this frightening epidemic has so far claimed only three victims. Perhaps you should be more worried about the members of the American Medical Association.

THE State of Wisconsin has approved a motion calling for a 'nuclear weapons moratorium and reduction'. This is the first state to vote on the issue of a nuclear freeze. Another eleven such votes are expected in the mid-term elections in November.

THE Department of Health and Social Security has published a plan to computerise its records. This will be, of course, to improve efficiency and speed up the processing of claims. It will also provide centralised records on 24 million people and reduce staff by 25,000.

THE car to expropriate on the morning of the revolution has been spotted in central London. A black Rolls Royce, registration RPG 7. Unfortunately, in south London there is a blue one, SPG 57.

LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTER

SIMON LOS

Dear FREEDOM,

I'm sure we all remember the gaoling of Simon Los. In our view what the State did to Simon was an extreme action even by their standards: (Molotov-throwers got less). Just like his counter-part in the Soviet Union (Vladimir Mikhailov), Simon Los was imprisoned for three years: their joint crimes?: to give out leaflets that attacked the State. They are both martyrs and must not be forgotten. We suggest the following course of action on their behalf:-

October 21st 1982 marks the anniversary of Simon's imprisonment. The man who 'sent him down' was Justice-Mars-Jones (known as 'Willie' to his chums). We thought that on Thursday October 21st, people who took a dislike to his lordship's actions could ring him up and tell him so (on 01-405-3632)—also we implore all you lot in apathy-land, to write to him and tell him what you think of him. You could also write to your MP and the Home Secretary (c/o House of Commons) and demand that Simon is released. We have done, and received replies. OK this probably won't get Simon freed, but at least those in authority will realise that there are a lot of angry people living in 'their State'.

As regards Vladimir Mikhailov, well write to the Russian Embassy, and mention him to your MP as well as Simon Los.

A lot of people might react to all of this by saying 'Oh it's all a waste of time, it won't achieve anything'—well you think of something better is our reply.

Let those who rule us learn the names of Simon Los and Vladimir Mikhailov, let them know that there are people who will fight for their freedom. Too often anarchists make suggestions, and too often sweet FA happens. For once do something—do this!

If you do take pen to paper (or have a 'chat' to the judge)—and anything results, then let FREEDOM know!

Yours in expectation,
GENERAL NED LUDD,
CAPTAIN SWING,

Sussex S@S

ALF & A

Dear FREEDOM,

(RE Letters 11 Sept)

What has the Animal Liberation Movement got to do with Anarchism? Not a lot; and if reports are true that it was ALF who released those mink in Perthshire and Essex, they have bugger all to do with Environmentalism.

So 'Clixby' thinks that as anarchists we must 'believe that all creatures have a right to live out their lives without persecution.' Try explaining that one to the mink and whoever released them. Not only are mink extremely efficient killers, but also, as non-indigenous carnivores

they are wreaking havoc on our indigenous species.

One example: Here in Cumbria on the Rivers Black Lyne and White Lyne there were 200 pairs of mallard breeding 5 years ago, due to mink, predation they are extinct there as a breeding species.

Maybe 'Clixby' means just humans shouldn't persecute other species.

Well, comrade, you can count me out of that diktat if by persecution you mean killing and eating other animals. Not only do I live in an upland area where the only food we can produce in any quantity is sheep and beef cattle, but also to supplement my meagre income from working on farms, I kill and eat rabbits, hares, pigeons, trout etc, and to reduce predation on the lambs and poultry I help kill any mink and some of the foxes and carrion crows in the area. I use the most humane and ecologically sound method, and on some occasions I join with other humans and make a 'sport' of it.

Yes, I am aware of the degree of suffering I cause, in nearly all cases it is less than that caused by other predators, and certainly less than that caused by disease, which is the other major control mechanism on species number, (except for some carnivores which experience stress-induced infertility.)

If there is an anarchist morality, and I think there is, it is that we should do as we please provided that we harm no other human. How we treat other species is up to the individual and, as no one is an island this decision is made with reference to the community. I don't know anyone who takes pleasure in cruelty to other creatures and although suffering to some degree is caused to both domestic and wild creatures, people invariably try to minimize it once they are aware that it is happening.

The exploitation of wild and domestic animal resources, indeed the whole of agricultural practice should be carried out at a level that is sustainable indefinitely and in a manner that tends toward ecological balance. This is in our long term interests as a species.

However, I can agree with the ALFers that some exploitation is senseless. Some experiments on animals are for products of no real value or could be tested on tissue culture. But if I were ever sick or dying I would not refuse a drug because it was first tested on other animals. And as Lindsay Hart points out there is little sense in converting good grain into animal flesh, however, there is a lot of sense in converting grass into animal flesh and that is how most meat is produced.

To send grain to the Third World may be an unfortunate necessity in the short term but it merely reinforces the Capitalist system: the Third World can be manipulated by the rich grain surplus countries and in the poor countries control of the grain adds to the power of the governing officials, bureaucrat and merchant classes. Either these classes take

such a big cut that little reaches the peasant and urban proletarian classes, except at high prices, or, if the aid agencies distribute the food themselves, the peasant economy becomes entirely dependent on food aid.

Rather, the answer is to stop importing Third World foodstuffs and to return resources from the rich countries which will enable these poorer communities to become self-sufficient in basic foodstuffs.

Yet another good reason for an anarchist revolution, and come that glorious day comrades, maybe we will have to stop eating our imported rice and pulses and turn instead to rather solid bread and cheese, potatoes, greens, rootcrops and onions supplemented and flavoured with a bit of meat.

Wassat?? You'd rather starve first! !
LANTY

COUNTER-DEMO

Friends,

Military parade through City of London on October 12th, to commemorate 'Victory in Falklands', you probably already know of this but just in case, I let you know. An item in FREEDOM would be worthwhile to draw attention to this and to suggest anarchist protest, suits and ties to blend in might be a good idea together with some predetermined direct-action such as sit-downs in road at distinct points either as large groups or as many small groups.

Best Wishes,
MARK

SYNDICALISM DISCUSSED

Dear FREEDOM,

The discussion about Syndicalism has become a bit confused, and should be clarified.

The editorial criticising trade unionism (10 July) referred to 'the use of trade unions as any kind of authoritarian institution, as in Syndicalism or Guild Socialist theory'; the reference was clearly to Syndicalism in general rather than to Anarcho-syndicalism. The letter from Ames (7 August) queried 'the apparent attack on Syndicalism'. In my reply (21 August) I tried to distinguish between Syndicalism and Anarcho-Syndicalism in particular, and also to describe the dangers to anarchism of any kind of Syndicalism.

The letters from Ian Swain and the three members of the Leeds Direct Action Movement (11 September) interpret my argument in a much more extreme sense than it was intended. I was clearly discussing general dangers rather than inevitable developments, and I used none of the strong expressions attributed to me by Ian Swain.

LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTER

In reply to the substance of their defence of Anarcho-syndicalism, I would emphasise the following points.

The reference to the Malatesta-Monatte debate of 1907 was intended not to give authority to one side in the controversy but to show that the controversy is a long-standing one in the anarchist movement and that criticism of Syndicalism is not a betrayal of anarchism.

Although our society is highly industrialised, it is not entirely industrial, and a large proportion of the population is not involved in the collective work of the kind suited to syndicalist organisation activity. There are people who are too young or too old, people who work alone, people who might prefer other forms of cooperativism, collectivism, communism, mutualism, and so on.

Although most of us are workers most of the time, we are also consumers and other kinds of non-workers at other times, and the interests not only of various groups but also of various individuals at various times may conflict. Industrial action often hurts not only or not even bosses but other workers and also non-workers, and this is just as true of solidarity action—as may be seen in current struggles in the railway system and the health service, where the aims and actions have often obscured what trains and hospitals are for.

Although such tendencies are not inevitable, the long experience of the labour movement shows that workers' organisations always tend towards reformism, sectionalism and authoritarianism, however libertarian their membership or structure, and that it is very difficult to make sure that Anarcho-Syndicalism remains anarchist.

Although such dangers may be particularly obvious in this area, such criticisms don't apply only to Syndicalism, but may of course be directed at every partial version of anarchism—middle-class just as much as working-class, liberal just as much as socialist, individual just as much as collective. Very similar things may be said about anarchism devoted only to ecology or education, only to insurrection or non-violence, only to sexism or sex. The point is that anarchists tend to take Syndicalism for granted without taking its defects into account.

Although it may be true that 'without class struggle anarchism degenerates into liberal reformism', it is also true that with only class struggle anarchism degenerates into authoritarian workerism. Although it is true that if we don't change the nature of working life we can't move towards an anarchist society, it is also true that if we only consider working life we shall forget some of the most important things about anarchism. To repeat what I said before, anarchism includes but transcends anarcho-syndicalism.

YOU MUST BE JOKING

Dear Comrades,

I think Steve (Letters 11 September) is joking, but for the sake of form I assume he is sincere in demanding an explanation of the Wildcat joke of 7 August.

The chap with the gun and the conservative suit, also with a bald head and glasses, represents Menachem Begin and the other terrorists on the Israeli cabinet. I had intended him to look like Begin, but I couldn't find a photograph or other reference. His failure to distinguish between Nazis and other gentiles is that of Menachem Begin, who remarked on 3 August that in bombarding the Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut his minions were bombarding the Nazis in their bunkers.

The chap with the beard, who says the poor Pussy Cat is not a Nazi, represents those Israelis and diaspora Jews who identify with Israel, who have reservations about the bloodthirstiness of current Israeli foreign policy.

FREEDOM 10 July had a Wildcat strip where the Pussy Cat and some chap are walking along screaming the outs against various invasions. The chap is pleased to join in OUT OUT OUT! until Israeli invasion of Lebanon is suggested, when he rounds on Wildcat and accuses her of antisemitism. This chap represents the people who respond like Steve.

No, I am not a card-carrying member of the National Front, or a supporter of any Fascists, anti-semitic or pro-semitic. As to whether Steve is paranoid, that depends on whether I am right in the opinion that Steve is joking. If he is not joking, he is paranoid.

Best wishes,
THE AUTHOR OF WILDCAT

Matriarchy's Miscarriage

Dear FREEDOM,

Theo Yeats' article 'The Matriarchy's Miscarriage' raised what I feel are important issues. It is absolutely useless for women to leave the home and family in order to achieve career and status and financial equality with men; by doing so, en masse, what women have primarily made clear is that they share society's (actually very low) opinion of the value of home-makers and maintainers. The great 'feminist' (so-called) dash towards supposedly 'more interesting' occupations not only damages children's home lives, but also in fact degrades women further. As women we ought to be allying with our children and standing up for their rights as well as our own; NOT trying to get them off our hands quickly so that we can flatter this

sick society further by trying to make ourselves useful to it.

I write this with a lot of personal feeling involved. When my children were very young I had an 'outside-the-home' job (years 67-69) partly from economic necessity and partly because I was brought up to feel I ought not to 'waste' my education. At that time I incurred considerable criticism from the women in my own, and other, age groups for not abiding by the (then) convention of remaining at home, which was considered, *a priori*, 'better'. When things eased financially, and I began to realise that the children's interests would be much better served by my being at home, I stopped 'outside' work. Lo and behold, over the last six years or so, I have found that I now inspire critical attitudes because I consider looking after the family to be 'my work!' With the exception of mothers of very young children (most of whom are longing to get back to 'work') there are virtually NO mothers at home in my area. The 'conventions' have completely reversed—and I am still on the wrong side of them! The worst of it is, perhaps, that there exists the same 'sheeplike' adherence to the new conventions as there was to the old; the change has not taken place from Enlightenment so much as from Fashion. And men's attitudes are correspondingly changing to complement what has happened. Having realised that to want a mother to stay at home means chauvinism, men seem to be just going along with it all—also because there are obvious material advantages if more money is coming into the household.

Theo Yeats says in conclusion to his article that the matriarchy, with its modern face of feminism, must carry the torch which will light the way to a completely different society in which the word domination has been completely eliminated.

It is surely apparent that unless drastic changes of heart and direction occur within the women's movement, we are all moving towards a state of affairs which promotes neither goodwill between men and women nor a better place for our children to grow up in. It scares me.

I simply cannot find any group of people who feel as I do about this, but Theo's article is probably the nearest thing I have read.

I should very much like to get in touch with others who think along such lines. I like FREEDOM and the views it represents (I have only discovered it lately) but I am disillusioned about most political movements to such an alarming degree that I find it hard to believe that Anarchy would be much different. It would be marvellous if there were any response. If there should be any replies from people with an 'orthodox Feminist' approach I would appreciate having the chance to answer the points they raise.

Sincerely,
MADELEINE S

FREEDOM CONTACTS

international

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literature

'The Bourgeois Role of Bolshevism'. Reprint of 1930 Guy Aldred pamphlet, 50p inc p+p from GPP Reprints, Box V2, 488 Western Road, Glasgow G12

'Alaska: Anarchy and Solidarity' is a newsletter and correspondence group for our northwest corner of North America's Northwest — it includes northern British Columbia and the Yukon Territory, too. We just started putting out the newsletter this year to link up with other anarchists, Wobblies and the libertarian left in our neck of the woods.

'Archipelago' is a populist, multi-media journal based on Southeast Alaska, although not limited to this region. We began producing this journal in 1977 with newspapers, cassette tapes, books and records.

Contact: Box 748, Douglas Alaska, USA 99824

'I am starting work on a publication called 'Anarchist Artists'. If there are any anarchist groups, singers, poets etc, please contact me at the address below'

Gaz of Black Ram
c/o Forum Books
86 Abbey Street
Derby

Can you help us?

We have an idea how to make non profit community radio but we have no FM-transmitter of about 3 watt or more.

FM-transmitter drawings, descriptions and useful informations could be sent to this address: Box No CRS, c/o FREEDOM

We are also very interested to come in contact with other progressive community radios (not pop-pirates) in London and UK.

HERE is a little news from the small anarchist contingent in Helsinki. They're attempting to set up an anarchist centre cum bookshop and have also got a new address.

They have also begun publishing a magazine, 'Barabbas', which appears every so often (about six times yearly) full of glossy photos and swish montage, articles only in Finnish dealing mainly with international topics: El Salvador, Third World, Poland etc, very little home news except perhaps support for a nuclear free Scandinavia/Baltic.

If anyone is in Finland they can also call in on Terttu Pesonen, Feltolan Koulut, 25390 Kiihala (tel: (924)-87660) who is acting as a contact address until the Anarkistikeskus has a permanent sitting.

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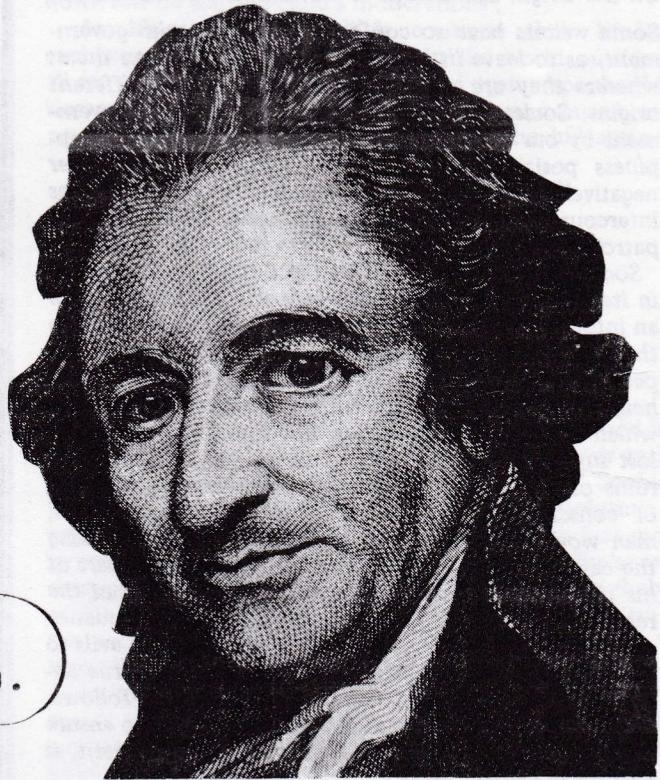
FREEDOM review

2nd October 1982 Vol 43 No 19

My motive and object in all my political works, beginning with Common Sense, the first work I ever published, have been to rescue man from tyranny and false systems and false principles of government, and enable him to be free.

Thomas Paine, 1806

THOMAS PAINE.



The Life and Major Writings of Thomas Paine edited by Philip S Foner. Citadel Press, paperback. (Available at £5.70 postpaid from National Secular Society or Rationalist Press, Association.)

THOMAS PAINE was one of the greatest political thinkers from Britain, one of the most effective propagandists for revolution in three countries, and also one of the founders of the anarchist ideology. As a result, he is generally ignored in histories of political thought and omitted from school and university curriculums, and his work has been preserved mainly by small groups of enthusiasts.

Unlike most political writers, Paine had plenty of experience of ordinary life. He was born on 29 January 1737 into a middle-class family of Quakers and Anglicans in Thetford, Norfolk. He was educated at the local Grammar School, but at the age of 13 was apprenticed to his father's trade of stay-making (corsets being an almost universal part of women's clothing). He twice ran away to sea, when he was 16 and 19. He worked as a stay-maker in London and then in Kent, and he married in 1759, but his wife died in 1760, and his business failed. In 1761 he became an exciseman (internal taxes being a major source of government revenue). He worked in Norfolk and Lincolnshire, but after four years was dismissed for minor misconduct. He worked in London as a schoolteacher and possibly as a Nonconformist preacher, until he was reappointed as an exciseman in Sussex in 1768.

Paine lived in Lewes from 1768 to 1774, working as an exciseman and also as a tobacconist after he married a tobacconist's daughter in 1771. In 1772 he produced a pamphlet advocating better pay for excisemen, and in 1774 he was again dismissed for misconduct. At the same time his business failed and he separated from his wife (though he continued to maintain her). Paine was faced with failure in his professional and private life, but for 25 years he had taught himself a great deal of science and philosophy, and for six years he had been involved in political affairs in Lewes, taking an active part in local government and local controversy, and becoming a radical Whig ('left-wing liberal', in later terms).

In his difficult position he did what many other people did in similar circumstances—he emigrated and made a new life in the New World.

Paine went to London, and met Benjamin Franklin, the leading American writer, scientist and politician. With Franklin's recommendation, he then went to America, and settled in Philadelphia, the capital of Pennsylvania and the cultural and political centre of all the Colonies. At the beginning of 1775, aged 37, he began a new career as a journalist, and achieved immediate success. He contributed to several papers, and edited one called the *Pennsylvania Magazine*. He wrote one of the earliest articles against Negro slavery, in March 1775, and also attacked the subjection of women, cruelty to animals, reverence for titles, and so on. But he was soon drawn into more explosive issues. He had crossed the Atlantic at a critical time, when the pressure of the British Government and the resistance of the American Colonies were leading to increasing conflict, involving armed clashes in several places during 1775.

In this crisis, the policy of independence was still very unpopular in America, but Paine became one of its leading defenders. In October he wrote an article concluding that 'the Almighty will finally separate America from Britain', adding: 'Call it Independency or what you will, if it is the cause of God and humanity it will go on.' In December he went much further and wrote a pamphlet giving detailed arguments not only against the British connection but against the British constitution, not only for American independence but for a democratic republic.

This was published in January 1776 as *Common Sense* (though Paine wanted to call it *Plain Truth*), and it became the single most influential writing in the movement towards the Declaration of Independence and open war. It made Paine famous—although it was published anonymously, and although he earned nothing from it. From our point of view, what is interesting is that it opened with a remarkable passage making the fundamental distinction between society and the state which is the essential basis of anarchist theory.

Paine's argument was not itself anarchist, but it is the beginning of anarchist argument.

On the Origin and Design of Government in General . . .

Some writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness positively by uniting our affections, the latter negatively by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last a punisher.

Society in every state is a blessing, but government, even in its best state, is but a necessary evil; in its worst state an intolerable one: for when we suffer, or are exposed to the same miseries by a government, which we might expect in a country without government, our calamity is heightened by reflecting that we furnish the means by which we suffer. Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence; the palaces of kings are built upon the ruins of the bowers of paradise. For were the impulses of conscience clear, uniform, and irresistibly obeyed, man would need no other lawgiver; but that not being the case, he finds it necessary to surrender up a part of his property to furnish means for the protection of the rest; and this he is induced to do by the same prudence which in every other case advises him out of two evils to choose the least. Wherefore, security being the true design and end of government, it unanswerably follows, that whatever form thereof appears most likely to ensure it to us, with the least expense and greatest benefit, is preferable to all others: . . .

The rest of the pamphlet contained the most extreme demands yet for separation from Britain and from the British political tradition, including some notoriously offensive passages. George III was described as 'the royal brute of England', and the historical basis of the British monarchy was dismissed in a single sentence: 'A French bastard landing with an armed banditti and establishing himself king of England against the consent of the natives, is in plain terms a very paltry rascally original.' Of course all this actually belonged to the British political tradition which had culminated in the Civil War and the 'Commonwealth' (ie Republic) of the mid-seventeenth century, but this tradition had been driven underground in Britain, and Paine's achievement was to bring it back to the surface in America. At the same time he revived the direct and simple style of political propaganda which had marked the British revolution.

Common Sense appeared in several editions, sold tens of thousands of copies, and was read by hundreds of thousands of people. Paine continued to take part in the complex controversies which culminated in the Declaration of Independence in July 1776, the war from 1776 to 1783, and the Constitution of 1787. He also put his principles into practice, by joining the Pennsylvania militia, from which he began writing a series of articles and pamphlets known as the *Crisis* papers. The first, in December 1776, at a critical stage of the war, opened with the memorable passage:

These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as Freedom should not be highly rated. . .

In 1777 Paine was made the first secretary of the Congress Committee of Foreign Affairs. In the second *Crisis* paper, of January 1777, he coined the phrase 'the United States

of America', and he always worked for the union as well as the independence of the States. But he also worked for something higher than any particular nation or race. In the act abolishing slavery in that state. In the seventh *Crisis* paper, of November 1778, he coined the phrase 'the religion of humanity'. He was always in close touch with current events, but at the same time aware of broader issues.

After the war Paine gradually withdrew from journalism and politics and increasingly turned to science and technology. He tried to design a smokeless candle, and he did design a new type of iron bridge. To develop the latter he went to Europe in 1787, and his plans were approved in France and partly followed in England (a prototype being erected near London in 1790, and a modified model constructed at Sunderland in 1793-96). But his pioneering contribution to engineering was superseded by more urgent contributions to politics—the French Revolution had begun.

Back in 1782, in his *Letter to the Abbe Raynal*, Paine had predicted that the American Revolution would influence England and also France. In 1787, in *Prospects on the Rubicon*, he predicted an imminent revolution in France. In 1789, he not only welcomed the revolution but again took a personal part in it. He was involved in the drafting of the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* and in the discussions about a new Constitution. In 1790 he was given the key of the Bastille to send to America, and soon he was again writing influential political propaganda.

In October 1789, Paine wrote to George Washington, the commander-in-chief of the American army in the war and the first President of the United States, that 'a share in two revolutions is living to some purpose'. He was about to begin his share in what might have been a third—in Britain. Many Whigs, and not only radicals, sympathised with the early, moderate stages of the French Revolution. This phenomenon was symbolised by a sermon given in November 1789 by Richard Price, a leading writer and scientist, and a radical in both religion and politics. Price saw the French Revolution as the successor of the English Revolution of 1688, which had established the limited monarchy and parliamentary oligarchy of England, and the predecessor of future revolutions in Europe, which would continue the process. Price's sermon was the occasion of *Reflections on the Revolution in France* by Edmund Burke, a leading Whig who had supported American independence and other radical causes but who had steadily moved to the right and eventually accepted a secret state pension. Burke's book, which appeared in November 1790, was the occasion of *Rights of Man*, Paine's most famous book of all.

The First Part was written in London, published in February 1791, and republished in March. It was mainly, as the subtitle put it, 'An Answer to Mr Burke's Attack on the French Revolution', and concentrated on French events. But it became the main text of the growing radical movement in Britain, which was concerned with the implications of French events on this side of the Channel. Paine revisited Paris, returned to London, and became a leading figure in this movement, writing manifestoes and addressing meetings; at one of the latter he proposed a toast to 'the Revolution of the World'. Dozens of replies to his book appeared, but Burke's only reply was to suggest 'criminal justice'—ie prosecution for seditious libel. Paine therefore wrote a Second Part, which was published in February 1792. It was a much more detailed argument for a democratic republic, and it became the main text of the radical movement for 40 years, until the first Reform Bill of 1832. From our point of view, what is interesting is that it opened with another remarkable passage expanding that in *Common Sense*.

Of Society and Civilisation

Great part of that order which reigns among mankind is not the effect of government. It has its origin in the principles of society and the natural constitution of man. It existed prior to government, and would exist if the formality of government was abolished. The mutual depen-

dence and reciprocal interest which man has upon man, and all the parts of civilised community upon each other, create that great chain of connection which holds it together. The landholder, the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the tradesman, and every occupation, prospers by the aid which each receives from the other, and from the whole. Common interest regulates their concerns, and forms their law; and the laws which common usage ordains, have a greater influence than the laws of government. In fine, society performs for itself almost everything which is ascribed to government...

If we examine with attention the composition and constitution of man, the diversity of his wants, and the diversity of talents in different men for reciprocally accommodating the wants of each other, his propensity to society, and consequently to preserve the advantages resulting from it, we shall easily discover, that a great part of what is called government is mere imposition.

Government is no farther necessary than to supply the few cases to which society and civilisation are not conveniently competent; and instances are not wanting to show, that everything which government can usefully add thereto, has been performed by the common consent of society, without government.

For upwards of two years from the commencement of the American War, and to a longer period in several of the American States, there were no established forms of government. The old governments had been abolished, and the country was too much occupied in defence to employ its attention in establishing new governments; yet during this interval order and harmony were preserved as inviolate as in any country in Europe. There is a natural aptness in man, and more so in society, because it embraces a greater variety of abilities and resources, to accommodate itself to whatever situation it is in. The instant formal government is abolished, society begins to act: a general association takes place, and common interest produces common security.

So far is it from being true, as has been pretended, that the abolition of any formal government is the dissolution of society, that it acts by a contrary impulse, and brings the latter the closer together. All that part of its organisation which it had committed to its government, devolves again upon itself, and acts through its medium. When men, as well from natural instinct as from reciprocal benefits, have habituated themselves to social and civilised life, there is always enough of its principles in practice to carry them through any changes they may find necessary or convenient to make in their government. In short, man is so naturally a creature of society that it is almost impossible to put him out of it.

Formal government makes but a small part of civilised life; and when even the best that human wisdom can devise is established, it is a thing more in name and idea than in fact. It is to the great and fundamental principles of society and civilisation—to the common usage universally consented to, and mutually and reciprocally maintained to the unceasing circulation of interest, which, passing through its million channels, invigorates the whole mass of civilised man—it is to these things, infinitely more than to anything which even the best instituted government can perform, that the safety and prosperity of the individual and of the whole depends.

The more perfect civilisation is, the less occasion has it for government, because the more does it regulate its own affairs, and govern itself; but so contrary is the practice of old governments to the reason of the case, that the expenses of them increase in the proportion they ought to diminish. It is but few general laws that civilised life requires, and those of such common usefulness, that whether they are enforced by the forms of government or not, the effect will be nearly the same. If we consider what the principles are that first condense men into society, and what are the motives that regulate their mutual intercourse afterwards, we shall find, by the time we arrive at what is called government, that nearly the whole of the business is performed by the natural operation of the parts upon each other.

Man, with respect to all those matters, is more a creature of consistency than he is aware, or than governments would wish him to believe. All the great laws of society are laws of nature. Those of trade and commerce, whether with respect to the intercourse of individuals or of nations, are laws of mutual and reciprocal interest. They are followed and obeyed, because it is the interest of the parties to do so, and not on account of any formal laws their governments may impose or interpose.

But how often is the natural propensity to society disturbed or destroyed by the operations of government! When the latter instead of being ingrafted on the principles of the former, assumes to exist for itself, and acts by partialities of favour and oppression, it becomes the cause of the mischiefs it ought to prevent...

Paine went on to explore ways of improving government, and the rest of the Second Part of *Rights of Man* gives the first clear arguments not only for parliamentary democracy but also for a welfare state. His friend William Godwin went in another direction, and in his *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Political Justice*, which was written immediately afterwards and was published in February 1793, he explored ways of abolishing it. Subsequent libertarian and anarchist writers went further, but like Godwin almost all of them have based their ideology on the foundations laid by Paine first in *Common Sense* and then in *Rights of Man*.

Rights of Man sold hundreds of thousands of copies, and must have been read by millions of people. The British Government, led by another former Whig, William Pitt, decided to prosecute it when cheap editions began to appear in April 1792, and when the Second Part became the main text of a more serious radical movement which involved working-class activists as well as middle-class theorists and which spread from London across the whole country. The



London Corresponding Society alarm, Vide, Batty Cooke

An anti-radical print from 1798, depicting the members of the London Corresponding Society. Note the picture of Paine on the wall. Gimbel Collection, American Philosophical Society



authorities decided to use the criminal law where political argument had failed. But Paine was not tried in person; in August he was given French citizenship, in September he was elected to the new Convention, and he immediately went to Paris to take his new position. (The story that he was warned to flee London by the artist and poet William Blake is almost certainly untrue.) He was tried in London in his absence in December, found guilty of seditious libel, and outlawed; he never returned to his native country. Publishers of *Rights of Man* continued to be prosecuted for several decades. The contradictory attitudes to him in Britain are shown by an ironical pair of facts—for many years, on 5 November, his effigy was burnt together with or instead of Guy Fawkes; and for many more years, on 29 January, his birthday was celebrated by public banquets.

In France Paine helped to write the new republican Constitution, but he soon got into trouble with the authorities again. His political associates were the moderate Girondins, but the extreme Jacobins took power in 1793, and Paine nearly shared the fate of many of his friends. Above all, although he supported the trial of the French King, he opposed his execution—and indeed the use of terror in general, against the right in France as against the left in Britain. He was himself arrested in December 1793, nearly executed, and not released until after the fall of the Jacobin dictatorship, in November 1794.

Just before his arrest Paine had written the First Part of *The Age of Reason*, which was published in 1794, and after his release he wrote the Second Part, which was published in 1795. Finding himself driven out of politics, he explained his ideas about religion, where he was also both a radical and a moderate, opposing Christianity but supporting Deism. Like *Rights of Man*, *The Age of Reason* became the main text of a radical movement against orthodox religion and the established churches. Its publishers were prosecuted for blasphemous libel for several decades, until the authorities gave up using the criminal law against religious or political freethought. Paine's positive ideas about God, creation and a future life were soon abandoned by most freethinkers (though they were later adopted by many so-called Christians), but his critical ideas about the Bible, revelation and this life became the basis of what has variously been called secularism, rationalism and humanism.

Paine was restored to the French Convention in 1795, but he took little further part in political activity. He did

write one more important political work, *Agrarian Justice*, which was published in 1796. This was the first time he considered the problems of private property and class society, which he proposed to solve by a system of taxation on land and distribution of allowances—an anticipation of Henry George a century later and of the welfare state a century after that. But it had no influence at the time, and Paine himself had no personal influence any more.

In 1802 Paine returned to the United States, where he lived quietly until his death in New York on 8 June 1809. He was unpopular because of his unorthodox attitude to religion; some of his later writings on this subject were published in America in 1807, and then in Britain in 1811 as the so-called Third Part of *The Age of Reason*. Typically, Paine was bullied by clergymen trying to extract a recantation before he died; symbolically, he was refused burial where he wanted it, and his private funeral was attended only by the Catholic woman who had cared for him in his old age, a Quaker friend, and two Negroes. In 1819 William Cobbett brought Paine's bones back to England, and also symbolically lost them; but his soul goes marching on.

Paine's writings were published in many variously unsatisfactory editions for a century, almost entirely by individuals and organisations in the radical tradition. But Moncure Conway, the American preacher and writer who led the South Place Ethical Society in London for most of the second half of the nineteenth century, used a period of retirement from 1885 to 1892 to work on Paine's life and writings. The result was a two-volume biography and a four-volume edition of the writings, published on both sides of the Atlantic in 1892 and 1894-96; neither has been superseded, though a few new facts and writings have been discovered. In Britain the major works were kept in print by the freehought movement especially by the National Secular Society and the Rationalist Press Association. *Rights of Man* was included in Everyman's Library, and *Rights of Man* and *Common Sense* in the Pelican Classics, but *The Age of Reason* finally went out of print in the 1950s.

After the Second World War the most convenient edition became *The Complete Writings of Thomas Paine*, edited by Philip S Foner and published in two volumes in New York in 1945. The first volume was reprinted in the United States in 1974, and is now available as *The Life and Major Writings of Thomas Paine*. This is a 700-page paperback containing a long biographical introduction by the editor, chronological and bibliographical material, the texts of *Common Sense*, the sixteen *Crisis* papers, both parts of *Rights of Man*, both parts of *The Age of Reason*, and *Agrarian Justice*, together with editorial notes and an index. The texts are generally good, though occasionally inferior to those of Conway and his more conscientious successors. The editorial material is generally useful, though occasionally spoilt by Foner's Marxist bias and occasionally superseded by research done since 1945. It is a pity that the second volume isn't also available in this form. But here is the most valuable single book of Paine which is at the same time obtainable and reliable.

What is needed is really a new complete edition, and certainly a proper edition of *The Age of Reason*. Until then, this handy collection will do well enough for those who want to read one of the best political writers in English and one of the founders of our ideology.

NW



Betrayal Number 274853.7395

THOSE in high office or those seeking high office must of necessity make promises that they know they will never honour for this is the nature of the beast this is the corruption forming the cancer of power. From the Soho whorehouse Girls or Boys or Girls to the Prime Minister 'My government' is it a sad record through history and across the world of men and women lying their way out of solemnly undertaken commitments. At the end of the Second World War millions believed, and look around you from within any city within the western world and there is the visual record of promises betrayed and there are those who will say then those millions were foolish to believe but they held their rifles in their hands and they believed that the power to influence and change their society lay with them. One of those very small promises was that within the bombed city of London the riverbank of the Thames from St Paul's and through the money grubbing City of London would stay opened as public lawns and gardens but the politicians and the money barons decided that that small area of land was too valuable to waste on the nodding violet and the wild bee and they once more imprisoned the sweet flowing Thames behind the City's own version of the Berlin Wall. Whatever was achieved forty years ago is now in the last process of being destroyed by the money manipulating entrepreneurs aided by the jackal politicians of every party. Our society, nay every society, chooses to believe with a modicum of truth Carlton Club boardroomwise that vandalism is a natural by-product of the children of the labouring class by reason of our breeding and our environment for it must be admitted and accepted that members of the committee of the Royal Yachting Squadron or the directors of our great national galleries do not go around smashing the phones in telephone kiosks by reason of their breeding, environment and higher intelligence. But I would suggest, with simple humility, that those men and women in high private or public office in every country of this world have caused us more harm than any skin head or purple haired fifth rate Bogart pulling up the plants in a public garden or making themselves a communal pest by breaking the telephones in the public call boxes. I have seen the temple of Mithras the Persian divinity of light revealed by the archaeological spade after two thousand years and then built upon with the inevitable 'office block'. I have seen buildings of historical worth cynically bulldozed down for easy money. I have seen nurses standing on strike pickets outside our 'socialist' hospitals fighting for a weekly wage above the poverty line. I have seen fools cheering soldiers off to die in a small war, I have seen a generation destroyed twice in my life by politically created unemployment 0 and I have seen truth and beauty of wood, of brick and stone destroyed by those who 'deal' in Property. Across from the Victoria and Albert Museum is a very small space of grey grass open land. It is no more than a few square feet and within that small area of grey grass Members of Parliament 'of all parties and others' assembled on the 6th of March 1982 to pay their particular and peculiar homage to, and I quote, 'the thousands of innocent men and women and children from the Soviet Union and other Eastern European States who were imprisoned and died at the hands of Communist governments after their repatriation at the conclusion of the Second World War'. Sculptured and Landscaped by Angela Conner. It was not a particularly inspiring piece of sculpture, made of Dorset stone and no bigger than a kitchen table, and it rocked

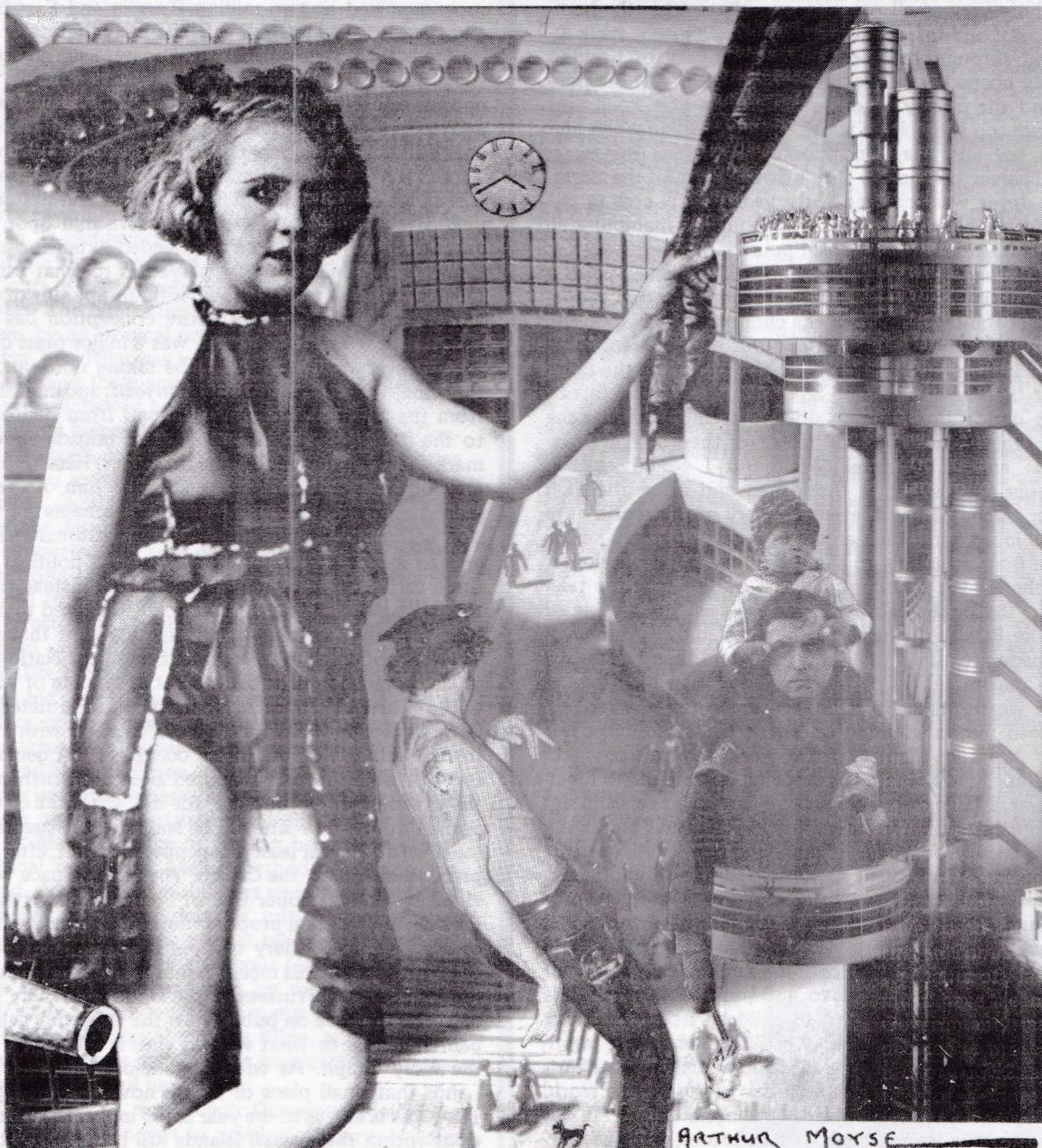
on its base as a permanent stream of water flowed from one hollow in to another hollow from over flow to over flow. Despite a guard mounted by various committed people the sculpture has now been completely smashed and the water no longer runs and the broken pieces of Dorset stone now lay unattended and forgotten among the dead leaves and the grey grass at one with the memory of murdered innocence. A dozen drunken youths it is said smashed the £10,000 sculptured stone after first attacking the voluntary guard and one assumes that the whole thing is now an historical write off except that the plaque is still there for the reading and from the Dorset stone littering the grey grass to the reporting in London's *Evening Standard* the 'thousands of innocent men, women and children' now newspaperwise is now reported as two million Russian and East Europeans' and it adds 'jailed by Stalin'. Statements that never appeared on the plaque. Truth or beauty who were the greater vandals the breakers or the reporters? And across the town the Town and his calculator tapping frau tripped the light farrago heel and toe to the National Gallery for the Press Conference concerning the National Gallery Extension and why it ain't. To the left of the National Gallery as you or I stand facing it is a plot of open ground leading into Leicester Square and year after year we were led to believe that upon this holy ground was to be erected the needed extension to the National Gallery. Games were played as to what form the extension would take and now, with an aplomb that Samson would have admired, the entire conception has collapsed before it was even erected. It was a major press conference in that everyone appeared to be taking notes and ignoring the wine, with the exception of myself, and men and women from the plush architectural journals from Bedford Square to the jeans, beards, glass and girder brigade were there to mark off the metres and parse the angles. Heseltine the Secretary of State and may Heaven forgive him of the Environment has greeted the rubber stamped scheme for the extension with delight which to me makes it automatically suspect and to me of my innocence it seems a political contrived three card trick in building space in that instead of rejecting this set up out of hand 'the public' are asked to choose the lesser evil that awfulness, that awfulness or that awfulness. There is not going to be an extension to the National Gallery as the populace might believe but a Building of which and I quote 'Three floors of lettable offices are situated at Lower Ground, Ground and First Floors, together with a Basement for the sole use of the office occupiers', 'A generous space for a Trustees Suite is proposed along the north-east side of the sunken garden' but the, for me, Catch 22 clause is, and again I quote 'The site will be leased to the successful developer on a 125 year lease at a peppercorn rent, after which the premises revert to the Crown. The gallery space will be provided by the developer free of charge' and this magnificent scheme, if you are a property developer, was the inspiration of the National Gallery trustees and Heseltine the Cock of the North. What this means is that never again in this nation's lifetime can the Trustees of the National Gallery plead lack of space to place on public view the flowering genius of the painter's craft or what we will view is office wall space and the Holy Graph. As with the enclosures of the Common Lands that small piece of land is now lost to the people for 125 years brings us to the year 2,107 and at least three generations within these small islands will be dead and buried and still that small site will not belong to them. And who dare

foretell the future in the year 2,107. I protested this at the first press conference and shrugged my shoulders at Le Grande Press Conference when a wine sipping journalist explained to me that it was all too late now and I was wasting my time and the 'leading architect of the day' explained in minutiae detail why he continued to design blocks of working class barracks and why the working class enjoyed living in them despite the occasional 16th floor tenant leaping windowwise to her death. We never know who was the individual authority who rubberstamped the permission to throw up the clownish architectural follies that litter every city but at least the Town and his bemused frau can witness the abortive birth of the National Gallery high rise 'extension'. One does not stay in high office within the State or the Private Sector by challenging that authority therefore in that area one asks nothing except regret that there was not some Renaissance Prince to reject the planned rubbish on offer but having rejected both the politic and the plan I will tell them what should have been done. Forget about the demand to harmonise with Canada House for that building should be pulled down to open out Trafalgar Square as a great area of concourse, in the Greek fashion, for the peoples of London and those who come, No extension should be tacked onto the facade of the National Gallery for in doing so the harmony of the line is broken and it gives the illusion of a

concrete version of the Unsinkable Titanic seconds before it broke the four minute mile straight down.

On ground level the created extension should be a separate building separated by a pleasant pedestrian walk and it should be connected to the main building of the National Gallery by continuing the basement gallery within the National Gallery and the entire extension should be given over to the visual wealth of the National Gallery. In appearance it should not be made to harmonise with the National Gallery facade for this would destroy the unity of the whole as displayed by the National Gallery. To the right of the National Gallery, as we stand facing the building, is the historic church of St Martin's in the Field and any building on the left of the National Gallery should be built to harmonise with the appearance of that beautiful church. Three buildings forming a unified whole. It will not be done, but for the record here is what *should* have been done. And again for the record plus a plea. I beg you not to strike me across the brow with a loaded handbag for she, and everything else, within the collage is taken from works on public exhibition in London's art galleries from the two National Gallery Extension submissions to the Chirico, to the four people in the foreground, from the Photographers Gallery Exhibitions and I am but your most humble servant.

ARTHUR MOYSE



SALT and VERY GOOD

The Salt Eaters by Toni Cade Bambara. The Women's Press, London 1982. 295 pp. £3.50.

IN A celebrated exchange with an angel ('Curse for a Nation'), Elizabeth Barrett Browning is asked by him to write a curse on the American slave trade. The poet demurs:

To curse, choose men.

For I, a woman have only known

How the heart melts and the tears run down.

But the angel insists with an irresistible argument:

A curse from the depths of womanhood

Is very salt, and bitter, and good.

For many years now women have accepted this challenge to transform the suffering of women into anger and art. Some of the early efforts were very fine — Kate Chopin, Dorothy Richardson, Henry Handel Richardson, Agnes Smedley, Christine Stead, Jean Rhys, Kay Boyle, Willa Cather and Rebecca Harding Davis are a few who come to mind. Sadly their work is still relatively unknown. However some women's publishing houses are redressing the neglect and republishing many of their works as feminist classics. This is excellent. What is depressing however, is that the publishing ratio of the classics to contemporary women's writings is still very high. Now, at a time when women writers have never had it so good, they produce very little fine writing. The content tends to be superficial, bitter and not good.

The Women's Movement has been both blessing and curse for women writers. On one hand there are feminist, women-only publishing houses, magazine outlets, women's writing groups and sisterly encouragement. On the other, the Women's Movement has spawned heavily ideological writing. And ideology is the kiss of death to art. Female characters tend to be flat mouthpieces of Feminism. The men are stereotypical anti-heroes. There's not much leeway for creative imagination when there is an obsessive focus on women's problems in abstraction from all else. However, there are exceptions. *The Salt Eaters*, Toni Cade Bambara's first novel, is an honourable one.

Bambara sets her story of would-be suicide, Velma Henry in the Southwest Community Infirmary. Here Velma is confronted with Minnie Ransom, spinner of old lore, dreams, memories, commonsense and healing powers. From page one, Minnie is established as a powerful force.

'her bright red flouncy dress drawn in at the waist with two different strips of kenti cloth, up to her elbow in a minor fortune of gold, brass and silver bangles. Her head wrapped in some juicy hot-pink gelee, was tucked way back into her neck, eyes peering down her nose at Velma as though old-timey spectacles perched there were slipping down.'

Minnie's met her match in Velma. All her life Velma has been a fighter. Now she's fighting to slip away from Minnie's difficult questions and determination to make her 'whole' again. Two other strong women are drawn into the battle for Velma. One is Old Wife, Karen Wilder with whom Minnie has exchanged wisdom all her life ('Doan letcha

mouf gitcha in what ya backbone caint stand'). The other is Sophie Heywood, 'the god-mother ready to turn the lamp down low on the god-child's indiscretions'.

As Minnie and Old Wife continue their life-long exchange, their ruminations draw in the world outside in all its richness. Minnie becomes a girl again, 'spooked' by Karen Wilder with her untreated hair lip and mud-brown complexion. In her memory she climbs the hill again to see her:

'Sleepwalk stomping to the mound, the hill, the special place, the rich dark earth, the eating dirt that smelled of paprika and curry, smelled of spice and sweet and bitter and sweat from the days when the Gypsies had planted their Sara, their Black Madonna, at the crest of that hill and the community of Sicilians on an adjacent hill turned their Black Madonna aside, giving Sara her back.'

For all the bitter experiences that Sophie Haywood has had with Velma, she understands that 'You never really know a person until you've eaten salt together.' Sophie's prepared for Velma's next trial, however cataclysmic it might be. Velma the fighter can only recover to face more struggles ahead. Sophie is strong and wise. She's seen through the fakery of conventional healers whose 'habits of illusion' are divorced from the society around them — the social workers, analysts and therapists who need 'to make things up in order to go on living blind.'

In so many feminist novels women are required to be strong in a thin social matrix which does not admit of a world that is other than 'woman-centred'. Bambara indulges in no such 'living-blind'. Her characters are alive in a southern community vibrant with the expectation of the carnival. The smells of the countryside, the mangled wastelands of domestic junk, the rusting car shells, and all of society's litter permeate the Infirmary. It's a human community of women and men, warts and all. The onlookers, sceptical or not about Velma's healing search, are prodded by Minnie and Old Wife to examine themselves and the world around them. Like Velma, their reward for becoming 'whole' is more hardship and struggles. All are salt-eaters.

One such is Fred Holt, bus driver. He takes a hip-talking troupe (the Seven Sisters of the Grain) on a nightmare bus ride as he grieves angrily for his senselessly murdered friend Porter: 'Two goddam needles stuck in Porter's neck at the Pit Stop. Some in-a-hurry passenger taking exception to Porter's second slice of pie, or to his neat look and fresh smell of bay rum and talc . . . who knew why?' All that is left to Fred is his slatternly wife and the memories of his lost friend. Porter, who had been dying of some wasting disease, the result of atomic testing (Yucca Flats, 1955), still speaks insistently in Fred's memory. Everyone needs healing, he says: 'we are dying from over-exposure to some kind of wasting shit — the radioactive crap, asbestos particles, noise, smog, lies.'

There are some marvellous passages in this book, some very fine writing. Plumbing the 'depths of womanhood' means plumbing the depths of human beings, situated in communities of human beings. Realist, super-real or surreal, a good novel must rest on this base. It's instructive that the weakest parts of the book — in themselves, and because they interrupt the pace and intensity of the rest of the writing — are those which are closest to other feminist offerings. Velma's life as a woman radical activist is nowhere near as commanding as her struggle in the Southwest Community Infirmary. It's here that she gains stature and life. If only other women writers could learn from Bambara how not to live blind, we might expect some powerful writing — salt, bitter and very good. Meanwhile I very much look forward to Bambara's next novel.

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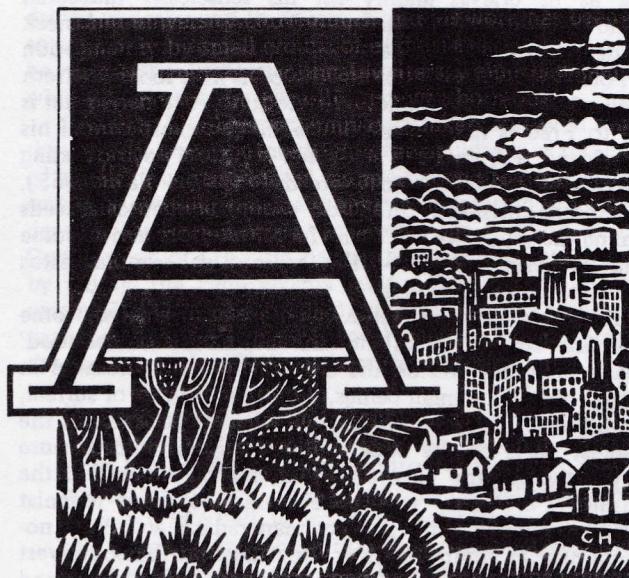
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